

Resources

Norfolk County District Attorney's Office

Education and Intervention Unit

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The Education and Intervention Unit has developed several programs to discuss the issue of bullying with schoolchildren. We are available to come to speak to classrooms and assemblies, youth groups and sports teams, to work towards minimizing the effects of bullying in our schools and communities. In school settings, our aim is to integrate our programming into existing health curricula, so that the message of no tolerance for bullying is underscored for our student audience.

There is also extensive information available on-line at the following websites:

www.stopbullyingnow.com

www.bullying.org

www.bullybeware.com

<http://school.discovery.com/schooladventures/health/cruelschools/>

<http://ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/bullying/bullyingbook.html>

<http://ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/bullying/1060.html>

<http://www.thefamilycorner.com/archives/growingpains/8.shtml>

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Working Together,



We Can Stop Bullying

A Message from the District Attorney



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William R. Keating
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Bullying is one of the most underrated and enduring problems in schools today and is a reality in the lives of all children, whether they are bullies, victims, or bystanders. For too long, bullying has been perceived as an inevitable part of growing up. As a society, we have learned the tragic lesson that bullying is a prime contributing factor to violence in our schools and in our communities.

As a society of parents, educators and concerned citizens, we must work together to instill our children with self-respect and respect for others, so that we may eradicate bullying from their daily lives. This brochure offers an overview of bullying and some strategies and resources to assist you in this important effort.

Bill Keating

We must work together to instill our children with self-respect and respect for others

What is Bullying?

Bullying is any word, action, or other direct behavior that is intentional, cruel, threatening, and repetitive. It is the power which one child has over another. It hurts and keeps on hurting. Most bullying goes unnoticed and unreported and the effects can last a lifetime.



- ◆ In a recent U.S. study of more than 6,000 students in grades 4 through 6, 23% reported being bullied by other students several times during a 3 month period. Up to 7% of 8th graders stay home at least once a month because of fear of bullies. Direct bullying seems to increase through elementary school, peak during middle school or junior high school and declines during high school. While physical assaults decrease with age, verbal abuse appears to remain constant.
- ◆ Boys are much more likely to bully than girls.

- ◆ Still, girls do bully, but they are apt to use less physical means such as slandering, spreading rumors, etc.
- ◆ 80% of kids who are bullied seem to signal to others that they are insecure, have very little self-confidence, and will not retaliate against their aggressor.

Types of Bullies

Physical Bullies: These bullies are action-oriented. Physical bullies hit, kick, or take property.

Verbal Bullies: Verbal bullies use words to hurt and humiliate. This includes name-calling, constant teasing, insulting, and even making racist comments.

Relational Bullies: These bullies try to convince their peers to exclude or reject certain persons and cut them off from their social connection. This causes a devastating effect on the victim when children most need their social connections.

Reactive Victim Bullies: This person is more difficult to identify because they first appear to be targets of other bullies; however, reactive victims often taunt bullies and physically bully others. A reactive victim may provoke a bully into action, then fight back and claim self-defence.

Characteristics of People Involved

◆ The Bully

- Often comes from a home where physical punishment is used and where children are taught to solve problems through physical aggression
- A need for power and control
- Has little empathy for those he bullies
- Defiant
- Anti-Social

- Strong self-esteem
- ◆ **The Target**
 - Anxious and Insecure
 - Low self-esteem
 - May lack social skills and friends
 - Rarely defend themselves
 - May contemplate suicide or retaliation

◆ The Bystander

- Should report the incident immediately to a trusted adult
- Should offer support to the target
- Disapproval can be displayed by not joining in the laughter, teasing, gossip, etc.
- Should walk away (at the very least) — Bullies enjoy an audience



- ◆ Bullying occurs once every seven minutes.
- ◆ The emotional scars from bullying can last a lifetime.
- ◆ The majority of bullying occurs in or close to school buildings.
- ◆ Most targets of bullying are **unlikely** to report bullying. Only one in four students report that teachers intervene in bullying situations, while seven in ten teachers believe they always intervene.

What is the Solution?

- ◆ Immediate intervention by school staff in all bullying incidents
- ◆ Parents of both bully and target should be involved
- ◆ Create a respectful climate at home and in school
- ◆ Develop school-wide rules and sanctions against bullying
- ◆ Develop a confidential reporting system whereby students will feel safe
- ◆ Provide opportunity for students to talk about bullying

Bullying Must Be Stopped

- ◆ By age 24, 60% of identified bullies have a criminal conviction.
- ◆ Children who are repeatedly bullied sometimes see suicide as their only escape.
- ◆ Bullying has become the cause of assault and batteries, murders and suicides.
- ◆ Young children who were labeled by their peers as bullies required more support as adults from government agencies, had more court convictions, more alcoholism, more anti-social personality disorders and used more mental health services.

Under the new Aggravated Assault Bill, anyone charged and found guilty of Assault and Battery or assault with a dangerous weapon or where serious bodily injury occurs on children under the age of 14 will be sentenced to harsher punishment than that stipulated for "assault" as now defined by state law.